

**(Satipaṭṭhāna) Mittā Sutta**  
The Discourse on Friends (regarding Satipatthana)  
[Exhort others to practise satipatthana]  
(Saṃyutta Nikāya 47.48/5:189)  
Translated by Piya Tan ©2004

Introduction

A **comprehensive meditation practice** comprises three steps:

- (1) the abandoning of the five mental hindrances (*pañca nīvaraṇā*),<sup>1</sup>
- (2) the calming of the mind through the four satipatthanas (*cattāro satipaṭṭhāna*),<sup>2</sup> and
- (3) the proper development of seven awakening-factors (*satta bojjhaṅga*).<sup>3</sup>

This is, in fact, the method used by all the Buddhas, past, present and future, as noted by Sāriputta in his lion-roar and confirmed by the Buddha himself (**Nālandā Sutta**, S 47.12/5:159-161).<sup>4</sup> “That the five hindrances should be counteracted by both the seven enlightenment-factors and the four establishments of mindfulness is perfectly comprehensible when we realize that the first enlightenment-factor is mindfulness itself, which is activated by the development of the four establishments of mindfulness.” (S:B 1507).

However, there are **the social and psychological aspects** of *satipaṭṭhāna* practice not often stressed by modern meditation teachers. In **the Sedaka Sutta** (S 47.19), the Buddha makes it clear that through satipatthana practice, one effectively guards oneself and guards others. Conversely, “by patience (*khanti*), harmlessness (*avihiṃsā*), lovingkindness (*mettā*) and caring [active compassion] (*anudayatā*)”<sup>5</sup> one guards others, and so guards oneself—in this way, there is mutual safety.<sup>6</sup> And in **the (Satipaṭṭhāna) Mittā Sutta** (S 47.48), the Buddha exhorts his disciples thus: “Those for whom you have compassion and who think you should be heeded—whether friends, colleagues, or relatives—you should have them undertake, dwell in, establish themselves in the cultivation of the four focusses of mindfulness.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See (**Nīvaraṇa**) **Saṅgārava S** (S 46.55) = SD 3.12.

<sup>2</sup> See **Satipaṭṭhāna Ss** (D 22; M 10) = SD 13.

<sup>3</sup> See (**Bojjhaṅga**) **Sīla S** (S 46.3) = SD 10.1

<sup>4</sup> SD 12.18. This sutta is an abridgement of **Sampasādanīya S** (D 28/3:99-116). On Vipassī’s awakening, see above §3.10.

<sup>5</sup> Comy: The last 3 are the first 3 divine abodes (*brahma, vihāra*) of compassion (*karuṇā*), lovingkindness (*mettā*) and altruistic joy (*muditā*) (SA 3:227). See S:B 1925 n170.

<sup>6</sup> S 47.19/5:169 = SD 12.19.

<sup>7</sup> S 47.48/5:189 = SD 12.20.

## The Discourse on Friends (regarding Satipatthana) (S 47.48/5:189)

1 Monks, show compassion to those who think you should be heeded,<sup>8</sup> be they friends or colleagues or relatives or blood relations. You should have them undertake, dwell in and establish themselves in the cultivation of the four focusses of mindfulness.<sup>9</sup>

What are the four?

Here, monks,

- A. a monk dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful,<sup>10</sup> **contemplating the body in the body**,<sup>11</sup> putting away<sup>12</sup> covetousness and displeasure<sup>13</sup> in the world;<sup>14</sup>
- B. a monk dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful, **contemplating feelings in the feelings**, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world;
- C. a monk dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful, **contemplating the mind in the mind**, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world;
- D. a monk dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful, **contemplating dharmas in the dharmas**, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

Monks, show compassion to those who think you should be heeded, be they friends or colleagues or relatives or blood relations. You should have them undertake, dwell in and establish themselves in the cultivation of the four focusses of mindfulness.

—evam—

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<sup>8</sup> Meaning here, “those who show respect to you.”

<sup>9</sup> *Ye bhikkhave anukampeyyātha ye ca sotabbam maññeyyūṃ mittā vā amaccā vā ñātī vā sālohita vā; te vo bhikkhave catunnaṃ satipaṭṭhānānaṃ bhāvanāya samādapetabbā nivesetabbā paṭitthāpetabbā.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ātāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhā, domanassaṃ.* See SD 13.1 Introd (4.2).

<sup>11</sup> “Contemplating the body in the body” (*kāye kāyānupassī*). See SD 13.1 Introd (3.4).

<sup>12</sup> *Vineyya*, see SD 13.1 Introd (4.2c) above.

<sup>13</sup> “Covetousness and displeasure,” *abhijjhā, domanassaṃ*, which Walshe (1995:335 & n632) renders as “hankering and fretting for the world”; alt trs “desiring and disliking” or “longing and loathing.” See SD 13.1 Introd (4.2).

<sup>14</sup> “World” (*loka*). See Sd 13.1 Introd (4.2b).